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From Guest to Host: Cultural and Language Conflict in the Korean American Catholic Parish

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Cultural and Language Conflict in the Korean American Catholic parish

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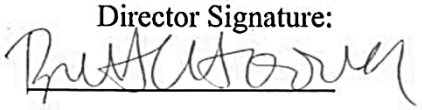

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Abstract

Pastoral ministry in the context of Korean American Catholic parishes brings many challenges, including that of cultural conflict. Frequent miscommunications occur between the Korean speaking and English speaking groups who coexist in these parishes. Considering some of the socio-cultural and theological factors of this issue, which are explored in this paper, a pastoral plan utilizing social media is proposed.

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Case Study

A vast array of cultural conflicts can be encountered when ministering to intercultural parishes.[1] These conflicts include, but are not limited to, those stemming from language and generational gaps. The following account from my personal experience during a staff meeting at a Korean-American Catholic center will provide an example of conflict in the setting of an intercultural parish.

My parish (Korean Martyrs Catholic Center in Westminster, CA) has two monthly Eucharistic adorations: one on the first Friday for the Korean speaking, and one on the second Friday for the English speaking.[2] We call the Korean speaking adoration "성시간" (*seongsigan*),[3] while we call the English speaking adoration "Holy Hour." During a staff meeting that took place during the season of Easter, our parish sister interjected a statement regarding the parish adoration schedule. She asserted it would be inappropriate to have *seongsigan* during this liturgical season. The pastor looked puzzled and questioned her, wondering why it would be inappropriate to have Holy Hour. As the conversation continued with other staff members chiming in, there was a palpable tension that began to fill the room. As I quietly listened to what each person had to say, I came to realize this was a

[1] In this paper, intercultural does not simply pertain to instances of multiple ethnic or ancestral cultures (i.e. Korean, Vietnamese, French, etc.), but includes the interaction between different cultures that may exist within the dominant grouping (i.e. Korean and English speaking cultures within Korean-American group).

[2] Korean-American Catholic church communities are most commonly divided into Korean speaking group and an English speaking group. Ministries are then established within each of these main groups. The Korean speaking group typically consists of those who have immigrated to the U.S. from Korea post-adolescence, while the English speaking group typically consists of second generation Korean Americans who were either born in the U.S. or immigrated to the U.S. at a very young age.

[3] Romanization done according to the South Korean Ministry of Culture (2000).

miscommunication between two very different cultural understandings behind the words used to describe Eucharistic adoration.

Our staff is composed of six Korean speaking parishioners and two English speaking parishioners; our parish sister belongs to the Korean speaking side, while our pastor and I are the only two staff members who belong to the English speaking side. Due to this, our meetings are primarily conducted in Korean, as it is the language that is most comfortable for the majority of staff. Most conversational Korean words can be translated into English with ease, so my pastor and I do not typically run into major issues even when confronted with a Korean word that is unfamiliar to us; however, religious words can prove difficult to translate on occasion, due to some words requiring cultural knowledge that we do not possess.

The literal translation of *seongsigan* is "Holy Hour." Holy Hour in English is a commonly used alternative term for adoration; however, the Korean cultural understanding of *seongsigan* is that it is associated with spending time with Jesus in his last hour (in Gethsemane), therefore, the Korean "Holy Hour" and the English Holy Hour require markedly different postures of prayer and adoration. This Korean cultural perspective on *seongsigan* was how our parish sister understood the scheduled adoration we were discussing, while the literal translation ("Holy Hour") led our parish priest to interpret it through the English cultural understanding. These respective views on the title of adoration greatly affected how each party understood the attitude and posture of adoration. For the parish sister, *seongsigan* was viewed as inappropriate for the time of year due to it being the liturgical season of Easter when the faithful should be celebrating and joyous, rather than solemn. The parish priest's understanding of Holy Hour led him to view it as quality time

spent with Jesus Christ. This led him to wonder why it would not be appropriate during the Easter season; in fact, Holy Hour seemed even more appropriate based on his understanding. The staff nearly cancelled the adoration out of this inter-cultural confusion, but eventually amended the title of adoration to, 성체 조배 (*seongche jobae*), or "Eucharistic adoration" which significantly shifted the meaning and posture from solemn and somber (*seongsigan*), to a general space for quality time with Christ (*seongche jobae)*.

The case described provides only one of many possible examples of the complex pastoral issue of inter-language and inter-cultural communication within a Korean American Catholic center, where the dominant group is not the English speaking, but Korean speaking. The church staff, as well as the ministry presence in these communities reflect the primary language demographic by consisting of almost entirely Korean speaking parishioners. Even ministers serving English speaking groups must have some Korean language capabilities. Though at the surface, this issue may seem easily remedied through employing and/or encouraging bilingualism, the case study I have presented you with implies otherwise. It illustrates how even amongst a room of bilingual staff, members can misunderstand each other through a lack of cultural and contextual understanding. In this paper, I will specifically address the pastoral issue that this inter-cultural gap presents for English speaking Korean American Catholic young adults who serve as leaders in parish ministry.

Context

Korean-Americans navigate a complicated and expansive socio-cultural matrix. Their identities cannot simply be defined as bicultural or hyphenated, as the term "Korean-American" may suggest. It is the lived experience of first generation Korean immigrants, as well as their

later generations, that they feel they are neither completely part of the Korean world, nor the American world. In fact, it may be of significance to note that there is no Korean word for "Korean-Americans."[4] Therefore, it becomes clear that along with a multitude of potential interpretations and various methods of navigation, there are also different perspectives where identity is concerned, including linguistic differences. These differences, as illustrated in the case study, are found between the two primary cultures concerned: Korean and American.[5] The English speaking Korean American Catholic young adults this paper is concerned with, live this heterogeneous or mixed experience. In the last few decades, many scholars have invented and reinterpreted numerous terms in an attempt to give a name to this specific experience.

For Julius-Kei Kato, the concept of "diasporic hybridity" is one that he defines as referring to all immigrants who have experienced a physical move from one homeland to a new homeland; however, he does not restrict this concept to the first generation of immigrants, contending certain experiences will be inherited by their descendants.[6] Accordingly, he notes the respective and different experiences of each generation. Sze-Kar Wan refers to the Asian American identity as "hyphenated" or "doubleness."[7] He argues that if one considers their hyphenated identity (i.e. Mexican-American) to place them firmly in both worlds of their double identity (i.e. Mexican and American), there is also the opposing perspective of "double rejection," in which one is rejected by both worlds -- too foreign for the host culture, yet too

[4] Simon Kim, *Memory and Honor: Cultural and Generational Ministry with Korean American Communities* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2013), xii.

[5] It is important to note that there can be many cultural identities that can influence and inform a Korean American. Here, I am focusing on the Korean and American aspects of identity in order to focus on what I have found to be the two dominant identities.

[6] Julius-Kei Kato, *Religious Language and Asian American Hybridity* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 12.

[7] Sze-Kar Wan, "Betwixt and Between: Toward a Hermeneutics of Hyphenation" in *Ways of Being, Ways of Reading*, ed. Mary F. Foskett & Jeffrey Kah-Jin Kuan (Chalice Press, 2006), 137-151.

mixed for the ancestral culture.[8] A different take on this either-or perspective is the both-and concept of *mestizaje.* In Latino/a liberation theology, the term *mestizaje* speaks to a mixed existence that according to Michelle A. Gonzalez, "name[s] the ambiguity and in-between-ness of Latino/a identity" and "functions to designate the mixed reality of Latino/a peoples."[9] Though all of these theologians utilize different approaches, they are unified through the concept at the core of their words, which remains the same: the mixed experience of immigrants and their later generations.

With this experience in mind, I will now look to the respective Korean and American components of the English speaking Korean American Catholic young adult identity, all the while keeping in mind that the discussion of identity is a complex matter, which involves many more factors than just their Korean-ness or American-ness. Rather than seeking to unravel the intricate web of their entire socio-cultural identity, by further investigating each of their two most central socio-cultural identities, I am seeking to gain a better understanding of their general context in order to better understand their inter-cultural context. I intend to do this through Kato's contention that later generations continue to be impacted by the immigrant experiences of their first generation parents, which leads me to first consider the history of Korean immigration to the U.S.

Korean Context

[8] ibid., 147-148.

[9] Michelle A. Gonzalez, "Difference, Body, Race" in *Questioning the Human: Toward a Theological Anthropology For the Twenty-First Century,* ed. L. Boeve, Y. De Maeseneer & E. Van Stichel (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 133.

Korean immigration to the U.S. has typically been categorized into three waves. The two most pertinent to our discussion are the second and third waves:

> The second wave, known as the postwar period, lasted from 1945 to 1965. Korean immigrants during this time period sought relief from the ravages of the Second World War and Korean War. From 1965 to the present, the third wave has generally been categorized as the post – 1965 immigration period. Many Koreans during this period left for the U.S. out of economic concerns and make up the majority of the Korean American population.[10]

Most first generation Korean Americans fall into these two aforementioned waves, and so it follows that many second generation Korean Americans' parents were from these two waves.[11]

It appears that most Korean American faith communities arose to address the needs of the second and third wave of immigrants, as most came into being during the 1970s and 1980s.[12] These first generation immigrants came to the U.S. with the mindset of physical, financial, as well as cultural survival. Due to these goals, Korean churches[13] became centers of cultural learning and preservation. This means that churches, in addition to religious significance, had social and cultural significance for Korean immigrants. According to Matthew D. Kim, being a part of a Korean church community offered Korean immigrants an opportunity to be surrounded by other Koreans where they could find potential husbands or wives who would also be Korean and shared the same cultural values.[14] Furthermore, churches often pair religion classes with Korean language classes, sometimes offering the option of various enrichment classes (which

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[10] Kim, *Memory and Honor*, 44.

[11] Sebastian C. H. Kim & Kirsteen Kim, *A History of Korean Christianity* (Cambridge, England: University Press, 2014), 302.

[12] SCAPA, *Harmony in Faith: Korean American Catholics* (Washington D.C.: USCCB, 2014), 16.

[13] Here, "churches" should be understood as referring to Christian churches in general, and not specifically Roman Catholic.

[14] Matthew D. Kim, *Preaching to the Second Generation Korean Americans: Towards a Possible Selves Contextual Homiletic* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 12-13.

may include Korean traditional dances or drumming). Sociologist Chaeyoon Lim states that this social function of the church is likely responsible for the, "unusually high level of religiosity among Korean Americans."[15] In brief, it would appear that being involved in a church community may have been about ethnic identity just as much as it was about religion for the Korean American Christians who immigrated to the states in the second and third waves. So what aspects, if any, of the first generation experience might have been passed on to the second generation Korean Americans?

First, it may be of help to turn to the topic of what has not been passed on to the second generation. One significant difference between the first and second generations are their priorities. Those of the first generation came to the U.S. with the goal of survival, as mentioned by Matthew Kim, Simon Kim, and other scholars. As a marginalized immigrant population, the resources available to the first generation were few and forced them to narrow and focus intensely on a few priorities necessary for bodily and cultural survival. In contrast, the second generation has many more resources available to them (i.e. fluency in the English language which may lead to more job opportunities), which enables them to have more freedom when it comes to choosing priorities.[16] The disparity created by the respective situations or realities of the first and second generations means that the "[acquisition] of the dreams and desires of middle-class America"[17] influences them differently. Andrew Lee states:

> Many Asian Americans can be depicted as being Americanized. As the model minority they mirror the aspirations, lifestyles, and habits – as well as the income

[15] Chaeyoon Lim, "Korean American Catholics in the Changing American Religious Landscape: A Statistical Portrait" in *Embracing Our Inheritance: Jubilee Reflections on Korean American Catholics (1966-2015),* ed. Simon C. Kim & Francis D. Kim (Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2016), 22.

[16] Kim, *Memory and Honor*, xiii.

[17] Andrew Y. Lee, "Reading the Bible as an Asian American: Issues in Asian American Biblical Interpretation" in *Ways of Being, Ways of Reading: Asian American Biblical Interpretation,* ed. Mary F. Foskett & Jeffrey Kah-Jin Kuan (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2006), 64.

> – of the middle class. Theologically, they identify so closely with middle-class evangelical Christianity that their ethnicity becomes secondary.[18]

Though both generations share a marginalized status, it is clear that the second generation, through acquiring the ideals and priorities of the American middle class, has come to identify more closely with their American-ness rather than their Korean-ness. This suggests the priority that has not been passed down from the first generation – the preservation of Korean-ness – and sheds light on a trait that has been passed down: the drive for success.

Due to the Confucian, Shamanic and Buddhist influences in Korea, there are many topics that are not to be addressed directly because of the dishonor and shame it would bring upon the individual, their family, and society.[19] A contemporary movement that began in response to the oppression these values could bring at a large scale can be found in Minjung theology. It was a theological perspective that emerged in the 1970s to give a voice to those who did not have one in South Korea.[20] The overall goal in Korean society was to maintain harmony, which will often translate into passivity in the American context. This manifests in the first generation Korean immigrants as silence in the face of any issues that concern family or one's perceived image. Issues such as abuse, disagreement, or citizenship struggles often never see the light of day as the priority is group harmony in privacy. Similarly, this same focus on harmony and honor means there are ways to honor one's family as well, particularly through success; however, success is conceptualized differently between the first and second generations.

For first generation Koreans Americans, success is generally measured by the achievements of their children. Important achievements include completion of higher education

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[18] ibid., 67.

[19] Kim, *Memory and Honor,* 50.

[20] Samuel Cheon, "Biblical Interpretations in Korea: History and Issues" in *Ways of Being, Ways of Reading: Asian American Biblical Interpretation,* ed. Mary F. Foskett & Jeffrey K. Kuan (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2006), 39.

(i.e. university and graduate school), attaining prestigious jobs (i.e. lawyer and medical doctor), and financial success. In addition, marriages within the Korean ethnic community were emphasized. This is especially important for sons (and even more so the eldest son), as they will pass down the family name and determine the purity of future generations. These ideals, along with the American Dream mindset that anything is possible with hard work, illustrates the first generation understanding of success: if you work hard enough you will get good grades, get into good schools, get a good job, and be honorable enough to marry an equally honorable Korean spouse.

In contrast, the second generation, with their range of resources and ability to prioritize more freely than their parents did, typically do not cling as tightly to their ancestral ideals of honor. Still, they do tend to indirectly prioritize honor by respecting the wishes of their parents, and by becoming high achieving students or gaining financial success. Therefore, it is more about success than honor for the second generation. Through identifying more with their American-ness, they tend to conceptualize success as being a matter of happiness. What I hear most from Korean American Catholic young adults regarding career moves is the issue of whether the job suits them, while the concern of the first generation adults is whether the job is prestigious, and even more so whether it will enable them to provide for their families. Even if marrying a Korean spouse does not function as a part of honoring family lineage, the new understanding of it as having a partner who will be able to communicate and care for parents once they reach retirement age means that the second generation still uphold the practice despite the different intention behind it than for their parents. In fact, it seems that many of the first generation experiences and ideals are passed down in this indirect fashion where practices are

preserved, but not the original intention. This adapted inheritance can also be observed through studying the Korean cultural concept of *han* .

The concept of *han* (한) came out of historical adversities such as the Japanese occupation and the Korean War. It is a Korean term with no English translation, and is a concept that is the source of Korean solidarity in the collective memory of trauma and oppression. Andrew Sung Park describes it as, "a term used to describe the depths of human suffering."[21] Interestingly, although it is largely understood as a unifying and communal concept, Simon Kim points to *han* being a source of unhealthy environments where comparisons are constantly being made. Kim argues Koreans are constantly comparing themselves to others and others to themselves, which subjects them to comparing themselves with other ethnic groups.[22] This comparing attitude that stems from the once unifying concept of *han*, combined with the value of honor, can create an extremely competitive environment wherein Korean families compete with one another. Though *han* began as a point of solidarity, it now translates into the second generation as the source of pride and competitiveness. This can lead to disunity in the face of adversity, rather than solidarity. In particular, the first generation and second generation have adapted differently to their experience of diasporic hybridity (whether lived or inherited), which naturally, has caused tensions to arise inter-generationally.

English speaking Korean American Catholic young adults have their own respective concerns that in some ways have perpetuated their isolation from the rest of the Korean American Catholic community. Though sharing an ancestral cultural identity in their Korean-

[21] Andrew Park, *The Wounded Heart of God: The Asian Concept of Han and the Christian Doctrine of Sin* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993), 15.
[22] Kim, *Memory and Honor,* 7.

ness, the first and second generation Korean Americans have adapted different goals and priorities. Thus, Simon C. Kim comments, young adults "have become the minorities of minorities and are further estranged and overlooked in Church and society."[23] This estrangement is one that is evident in the lack of leadership positions open to English speaking young adult in Korean American Catholic communities. Through the churches having been founded and built-up by the Korean speaking first generation, and often being led by missionary priests from South Korea, all the foundational systems implemented cater to the priorities of the Korean speaking parishioners. This can often leave the English speaking groups feeling discouraged, frustrated, and isolated from the core of the community.

Though Korean speaking young adult groups have existed and continue to exist, historically, there has been a lack of English speaking young adult groups; however, within the last decade there has been a rise of English speaking Korean American Catholic young adult ministries in Southern California. It began with the inter-parish ministry Fortes in Fide,[24] which led to the establishment of several young adult ministries including: YAM at St. Raphael Korean Catholic Center in Norwalk, CA; Christe at Korean Martyrs Catholic Center in Westminster, CA; and STEAM at St. Thomas Korean Catholic Center in Anaheim, CA. These recent developments are significant when considering the religious landscape of Korean American Christians where 40.6 percent of Korean Americans under thirty-five years old fall into the category of "religious nones." In addition, only 47 percent of Korean Americans who grew up Catholic remain in the same tradition, while roughly a quarter switch to no religious affiliation.[25]

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[23] Kim, *Memory and Honor*, 21.

[24] An inter-parish ministry with leading members from various Korean American Catholic centers from the Los Angeles and Orange County areas. Its main function is to serve the English speaking Korean American Catholic young adults through an annual retreat. It is now going into its sixth year.

[25] Lim, *Embracing Our Inheritance*, 18.

At a time when young Korean Americans are walking away from the Catholic tradition, these young adult groups that have formed appear to be a response to the current state of the Korean American Catholic community. However, Lim states the "Korean American community is not insulated from the rest of American society, and whatever forces that have been transforming the American religious landscape in recent years are also casting their influence on Korean Americans."[26] Therefore, I now look to the American-ness of the second generation Korean American identity, to dive into the parts of identity that were not inherited from the diasporic hybridity experience of the first generation.

American Context

In *Faith as a Way of Life*, Christian Scharen points to the core problem in American culture being that the spheres of one's life have semi-independence.[27] In other words, each world that one navigates operates according to its own priorities. He contends that there is a tension that comes from the conflict of values between all of the spheres we inhabit, and we manage this tension by compartmentalizing our lives. Another method of surviving the tensions caused by multiple spheres in one's life may be what Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton call Moralistic Therapeutic Deism.[28] This concept comes from a phenomenon in which many teenagers in the U.S. claim an affiliation with one religion, but do not necessarily adhere to the beliefs and practices of that religion. Throughout their research, they discovered that the most common set of beliefs amongst U.S. teenagers was not found in any one organized religion, but rather, a conglomerate of beliefs that could be summarized as Moralistic Therapeutic Deism

[26] ibid., 21.
[27] Christian B. Scharen, *Faith as a Way of Life: A Vision for Pastoral Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2008), 15.
[28] Christian Smith & Melinda L. Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 162.

(MTD).[29] The tension from conflicting values and the method of coping may be dominant factors in how second Korean Americans, who have acquired the American middle class ideals, are choosing to make decisions. To further investigate the social and cultural factors of American-ness that may be influencing second generation Korean Americans, I now look to the family home and media.

The focal point of the Western home has evolved drastically throughout the years, migrating from the dining table to the television to the computer, and ultimately to the gaming area. Sociologist Steve Duck argues that this shift in the home implicates a shift in our society's relational thinking.[30] In particular, he notes that the architectural changes in housing also implicate a shift in relational thinking that strays from communal thought and towards individuality and privacy.[31] In other words, that social interaction no longer center around the inclusion of others, but rather, the exclusion of others.

Duck's revealed values on relationship thinking concur with Scharen's findings of self-maximization as an obstacle for American society.[32] It would seem that the values of significance in the American identity would be those of individualization and exclusion, which though at first glance conflict with the Korean values of honor and *han,* may

[29] Scharen, *Faith as a Way of Life,* 162-163. MTD is characterized by the **belief** in the existence of a God who created and orders the world and watches over human life on earth; in a God who wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions; that the central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself; that God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem; that good people go to heaven when they die.

[30] Steve Duck, *Rethinking Relationships* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2011), 154.

[31] ibid., 153,154. Homes used to be structured as one big communal space with no rooms or designated spaces for set functions, thus, reflecting a communal focus on social relationships. Then, came the addition of rooms (bedrooms, living rooms, bathrooms, etc.) that reflected an emerging notion of privacy and a shift towards compartmentalization.

[32] Scharen, *Soul Searching,* 13.

actually have been the vehicles through which these values were translated in order to become a point of judgment and comparison in the community.

Theology

To delve into the possible theological perspectives on the issue of cultural and language conflicts in the Korean American Catholic parish, I intend to begin by casting a wide net that I will attempt to draw in tighter as we approach the conclusion of this section. In the initial casting of my net, I will begin with the historical understanding of sin, traced through four major thinkers from two time periods: Augustine of Hippo (354-430) and Pelagius (360-418) during the Patristic Era, and Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) and Martin Luther (1483-1546) during the Reformation Period. From there, I will explore biblical hermeneutics from several different cultural perspectives to finally arrive at my personal exegesis of Luke 24:13-35 (NAB Revised) as a Korean American Catholic.

First, I will attempt to introduce the perspectives of Augustine, Pelagius, Ignatius, and Luther with the ultimate goal of engaging all four in a dialogue that will center around their views on sin and grace. This dialogue, though seemingly arbitrary to the issue at hand, provides a broad context that is essential in coming to a fuller understanding of how the Church has historically dealt with conflict, and moreover, in retracing the steps that led us to a contemporary understanding of sin – sin as social. Considering the fact that the pastoral issue of cultural and language conflicts overlaps and collaborates with sociology, engaging in the history of the understanding of sin may prove vital to our deeper theological understanding of multicultural issues.

The Understanding of Sin

A major, if not the most influential, early contributor to the doctrine of sin in Western Christianity was Augustine. In *Confessions*, Augustine repeatedly refers to original sin as being inherited from Adam in a biological sense. His understanding of sin is grounded in a literal interpretation of Genesis 3. Based on his exegesis of Genesis, and combined with his own conversion experience from Manicheanism, he comes to understand sin as a choice that is made based on an inordinate desire that stems from the inheritance of original sin. He does not reject free will, but conveys a rather negative anthropology in his approach to humans as having a "fallen nature"[33] and being dependent on God's grace to overcome this predisposition. Central to his theology of sin was his understanding of love, and how sin flowed from the inherited human predisposition to love self over God (which is sometimes referred to as concupiscence). The ultimate goal of Christian life was to receive the love of God in order to return that love to God – a love he called *caritas* – which is how one would attain divine happiness. Though Augustine explicitly presents a positive anthropology in which he argues for humans as created good, his negative anthropology is revealed implicitly through his perspective on the fallen nature of humans that prevents them from having any choice but to do evil. Much of Augustine's development and work on the doctrine of sin came from his discourse with Pelagius who argued for an egocentric view of free will that prioritized the choice of man over the grace of God.

Pelagius asserts that humans are neither created with the predisposition for good nor evil, but rather, the capacity to freely choose either.[34] He distinguishes between three components of our free will: capacity, will and action.[35] He identifies capacity as being God given, but the

[33] Augustine, *Confessions* Trans. by R.S. Pine-Coffin (Penguin Classics, 1961), 44.
[34] Pelagius, "Letter to Demetrius" in *Theological Anthropology* Trans. by J. Patout Burns (PA: Fortress Press, 1981).
[35] Augustine, "On the Grace of Christ" in *Theological Anthropology* Trans. by J. Patout Burns (PA: Fortress Press, 1981), 63.

remaining two as being purely dictated by humans. Furthermore, he argues that capacity is the basis of human integrity, and that the capacity to do evil does not negate the goodness of humans.[36] He expresses the reality of this capacity succinctly in his *Letter to Demetrius*: "Our ability to do evil is, therefore, itself a good."[37] Here he is asserting that despite the morality of evil actions, the fact that God enabled one to have the choice to perform that evil action is the good. Since will and action belong to humans, sin is a choice that is compounded by habit, rather than an innate predisposition.[38] In other words, the inheritance of original sin was purely social – not acquired genetically, but through interactions or observations with other human beings – and based on the imitation of Adam's personal sin. In fact, all individual sin was personal sin for Pelagius, and therefore, did not have an ontological effect. He directly argues against Augustine's claim that we are predisposed to sin in stating that, "Doing good has become difficult for us only because of the long custom of sinning."[39] However, Augustine delivers his rebuttal in *On the Grace of Christ,* from a theocentric view that argues for God's grace being active in not only human capacity, but in the will and action as well. He says "without this help we neither choose nor accomplish anything good."[40] In other words, while God was but a mere gift giver in Pelagius' theology, for Augustine, everything began with and ended with God.

It may be important to note the personal approach of Patristic era thinkers. Their reasoning was grounded on their individual experiences, which they universalized to be the truth for all humanity (though no scholar, past or present, is exempt from this, it is my observation that Patristic era thinkers seemed to do this in excess). One might say these thinkers over-identified

[36]Pelagius, *Theological Anthropology,* 42.
[37] ibid.
[38] ibid., 48.
[39] ibid., 50.
[40] Augustine, *Theological Anthropology,* 94.

with the collective human experience, and projected their personal faith journey as the shared experience of the entire human race. This approach is reflected in the confessional nature of rhetoric between Augustine and Pelagius, in which they attempt to impose their understanding of God (that is grounded in their personal experience with The Divine), onto the other. Furthermore, Augustine was a bishop which warranted further support for his stance, while the Church treated Pelagius as a heretic. At the Council of Carthage (418), Augustine's perspective on the inheritance of original sin was accepted as doctrine.[41] This position was reaffirmed with the Synod of Orange (529) as the Church rejected the purely social Pelagian view on the inheritance of original sin that claimed Adam's sin did not having an ontological effect on the human race. They stated that the original sin from Adam affected the human physically and spiritually.[42] Therefore, original sin was identified as the source of human mortality and capacity to do evil. Much of this early discussion on sin revolved around the origin of sin, but as we introduce our next two thinkers and the Reformation period, we will see how the interest in sin shifts.

Martin Luther ushered in the Reformation period with his rejection of the Church's practices, mainly, that of indulgences. These indulgences could only be afforded by the wealthy, and in effect, limited salvation to whomever could afford it. In *Freedom of a Christian*, he makes two distinctions within human anthropology: the inner and outer man. He claims the inner man as the vital component for faith because "it is evident that no external thing has any influence in producing Christian righteousness or freedom, or in producing unrighteousness or servitude."[43]

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[41] Council of Carthage (1, 2)

[42] Synod of Orange, "The Synod of Orange, A.D. 529" in *Theological Anthropology*, Trans. by J. Patout Burns (PA: Fortress Press 1981), 109-110.

[43] Martin Luther, "The Freedom of A Christian" in *Martin Luther: Selections From His Writings,* Ed. by John Dillenberger (NY: Anchor Books, 1962), 54.

This leads him to consider scripture as the only necessity in the Christian life, as it will be the nourishment for the soul or inner man. He presents the outer man as a facet of the human that needs to be tamed, as he seems to identify it as the source of temptations.[44] Though the holy state of the inner man will form the outer man, he contends that the outer man cannot earn holiness through good works as faith belongs to the inner man. Through this neo-Platonic prioritizing of soul over body, Luther comes to claim that "faith alone justifies," meaning justification comes from the state of the inner man and the state of the outer man is irrelevant in the matter of justice.[45]

One may be able to glean both the attitudes of Augustine and Pelagius in the development of Luther's theology. As an ex-Augustinian friar, Luther retained the neo-Platonic notions of Augustine, while also retaining Augustine's negative anthropology in his view that man cannot do good without God. In addition, his response to the conditions of Christianity under the Church led him to a radical view that emphasized a human relationship with God without an intermediary. This perspective led him to a theology that was highly individualistic, though rather than arguing for the independence of humanity apart from God as Pelagius did, Luther argued for the independence of Christians from the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. Rather than over-identifying with the collective human experience and universalizing an individual's experience, as Augustine and Pelagius did, Luther under-identified with the collective human experience, therefore, individualizing faith. In his response to the Church's abuse of power during his life, he developed a hyper-individualized theology of a Christian's relationship with God. This individualized approach may be the root of individualism in

[44] ibid., 192.
[45] ibid., 56.

contemporary U.S. culture and faith, relevant for understanding the Korean American context. Luther's stance would lead to his excommunication, while Ignatius of Loyola experienced conversion.

Contrary to Augustine and Luther, both of whom associated human desires with our predisposition to sin, Ignatius believed that the "greater desires" of our hearts were the desires that God had placed in them, while the "lesser desires" were the inordinate desires that were our own. Though the lesser desires may not stem from God's will, Ignatius' spirituality leaves room for God to be present and working in every part of one's life. In other words, Ignatius allowed desires to be good, rather than confining all desires to evil. Ignatian spirituality is largely known for its language of discernment and various imaginative spiritual tools that help one distinguish between their needs and wants. *The Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius is his most distinguished work. In it, he outlines a four part spiritual pilgrimage in which directees are led by a director who journeys with them as they make the *Exercises*. The four parts or "weeks" begin with looking inward to personal sins, and moves outward to sharing in Jesus' suffering and resurrection."[46] This journey reflects Ignatius' theological assumption that God deals directly with the person in their interior movements.

One of the vital tools to discerning the desires of our hearts is the "Discernment of Spirits." Here he introduces the reader to the concept of "consolation," which he defines as, "that which occurs when some interior motion is caused within the soul through which it comes to be inflamed with love"[47] and "desolation," which he defines as the opposite of consolation. Another

[46] Ignatius of Loyola, "The Spiritual Exercises" in *The Spiritual Exercises and Selected Works,* Ed. by George E. Ganss (NY: Paulist Press, 1991), 122.
[47] ibid., 202.

way of understanding consolation would be as an orientation towards God, and desolation being an orientation away from God. Ignatius' perspective on desire reveals his theology on sin and grace as one that places God's grace in every aspect of life. However, Ignatius and Augustine share love as the central foci of their respective theologies. Both thinkers reveal an understanding of sin as a turning away from God's love, yet differ in their understanding of the availability of God's grace. Ultimately, we see that the interest in sin has shifted from the Patristic era's investigation of the origins of sin to the Reformation period's understanding of sin.

Through Augustine, Pelagius, Luther, and Ignatius, it is evident that the understanding of sin has been marked by much discussion and conflict. The historical discourse regarding the understanding of why humans commit evil deeds is one that lends itself the issue of parish conflicts in reminding us that humans are meant to prioritize God and his love. In turning away from God by taking advantage of others (as with the Roman Catholic Hierarchies use of indulgences that Luther opposed) or seeking the fulfillment of one's own desires (rather than the "greater desires" that were the will of God for Ignatius), church communities can grow distant from God and from each other. However, when we view the coping mechanisms of the church in moments of conflict and tension within the discussion of sin, the strategy appears to have been one of removal. In declaring Pelagius heretical and excommunicating Luther, the church took an either-or approach in the Patristic Era and Reformation Period.

Following these two time periods came the Enlightenment age, which would eventually lead to our contemporary understanding of sin. With its emphasis on reasoning and logic, the Enlightenment would usher in a new age in which past teachings were critically reassessed. A shift in the understanding of evil as habitual and cultural rather than religious or spiritual would flow from this critical approach. In the words of Stephen J. Duffy, "It was simply a problem of

personal psychology and/or human social arrangements. Its remedy would be intelligent human response, not the invocation of divine aid."[48] The critical thinking of the Enlightenment and Reformation eras continued into the 19th and 20th centuries as we entered an era of historical-criticism, in which the historically literal interpretation of scripture began to crumble. Luther was likely a contributor to this new perspective with his idea of *sola sciptura,* and his work in translating scripture into the vernacular which made the Bible accessible to those outside of wealth, scholarship, and power. This historical-critical approach eventually led to our contemporary exploration of sin as ongoing, rather than focusing on the origin of the sin.[49] In addition to the historical-critical approach, the modern understanding of original sin is based on the Council of Trent (1545-1563). Duffy gives us an eloquent illustration of our contemporary view on sin as social: "Not only are we what we choose to be; we are also what others decide for us."[50]

This understanding of sin as socially reciprocal, in tandem with our knowledge of church coping mechanisms with conflict, leads me to propose an and-or approach to multi-cultural parish conflicts that require an understanding of social factors. Therefore, we now look to cultural biblical hermeneutics, which has been the avenue that many have walked in order to come to a biblically based understanding of culture.

Cross-Cultural Biblical Hermeneutics

[48] Stephen J. Duffy, "Our Hearts of Darkness: Original Sin Revisited," *Loyola University Theological Studies,* 1988, 49:606.
[49] ibid., 611.
[50] ibid., 615, 616.

There are various cultural interpretations of the bible that have arisen, empowered by the historical-critical and now culturally aware theological landscape. We now turn to the biblical interpretations of African-American slaves and the lay people of Brazil.

The bible was at the center of thinking and life for the Europeans who settled the Americas. Slave owners would use the bible to justify a racial hierarchy that put Whites at the top, and persons of color at the bottom. Bearing this in mind, it seems natural that the bible would also become an important fixture in the lives of African American slaves. In his book *The Bible and African Americans: A Brief History,* Vincent L. Wimbush claims that the African American slaves used the bible as language. He proposes that in considering the reality of slavery -- by which one suffers a social death where they are disenfranchised from their former culture, language, and identity -- the response to that deprivation as the adoption of the bible as a new language is possible and compelling.[51] A contributing factor to their adoption of the bible as language can be found in the individualized freedom of bible interpretation European evangelicals taught slaves.[52] In other words, the bible became the imaginary life they could dive into and manipulate according to their own needs and social situations. From this freedom of interpretation came cultural interpretations found in spirituals, or songs. Similarly, this thread of freedom can be found in the biblical interpretations of Brazilians.

According to Carlos Mesters, the interpretation of the bible by lay people in Brazil reflects three attitudes: freedom, familiarity, and fidelity.[53] Firstly, lay people read with freedom by openly engaging with the text figuratively or literally depending on their situation. Secondly,

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[51] Vincent L. Wimbush, *The Bible and African Americans: A Brief History* (MN: Fortress Press, 2003), 5,7.
[52] Ibid., 23.
[53] Carlos Mesters, *Defenseless Flower: A New Reading of the Bible,* Trans. by Francis McDonagh (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989), 5.

freedom comes from their familiarity with the text, which refers to how comfortable they are with it, and not necessarily in their ability to quote from it word-for-word. The bible is seen as a text that empowers the people, and so Mesters claims that the bible has "changed class."[54] In other words, biblical interpretation has transitioned from the hands of colonial Europeans (who had the goal of intellectual bible interpretation), and into the hands of lay people of color (who strive to read the bible and interpret it in the context of their daily lives), thus leading us to the final attitude of fidelity. This approach reflects a unique interpretation of the text that allows one to transcend intellectual approaches, and to allow the text to become practical and relevant in one's own life.

From the writings of Wimbush and Mesters, it is evident that African-American slaves and the laity of Brazil have intimately incorporated the culture and stories of the bible into their daily lives, and therefore, into their cultural lives. In the same way that the bible found new breath in their cultures, their cultures also found new breath in the bible. As we move towards a possible Korean American Catholic exegesis of the bible, we now move towards a survey of Korean and Korean American biblical interpretations.

In his essay *Biblical Interpretations in Korean: History and Issues,* Samuel Cheon states that the Korean people "would read and understand the biblical stories as they engaged in imagination for their lives in the hearing of old stories or legends from their parents or grandparents."[55] In other words, the biblical stories were contextualized by the people. This contextualization naturally led to biblical interpretations that were inspired by historical events.

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[54] ibid., 8.

[55] Samuel Cheon, "Biblical Interpretations in Korean" in *Ways of Being, Ways of Reading,* Ed. by Jeffrey Kah-Jin Kuan & Mary F. Foskett (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2006), 33.

According to Cheon, there were three modes of theological thinking based on biblical interpretation that arose from the 1960s to the 1990s: Korean indigenous theology, minjung theology, and reunification theology.

Korean indigenous theology was brought on by the social trend of self-cultural awareness in the 1960s and 1970s. It focused on the importance of biblical interpretation from the uniquely Korean perspective rather than the traditionally Western perspective. Minjung theology can be likened to Liberation or Black theologies, and arose out of a need to give the oppressed and dehumanized working class a voice in mid-1970s Korean socio-political discourse. Reunification theology began at the end of World War II with the division of the Korean peninsula into North and South, and continues to the present day. Biblical interpretation from this perspective focuses on the Old Testament and identifies with the divided nation of Israel and Judah in sharing the hope that their country will be reunified (North and South Korea will become one).

When it comes to Korean American interpretations of the bible, John Ahn makes an interesting suggestion. In his essay *A Light to the Nations: The Sociological Approach in Korean American Interpretation*, he suggests that the experiences of the first and second generation Korean Americans can be paralleled with that of the first and second generation Judeo-Babylonians.[56] Furthermore, he reveals how North and South Koreans identify as two separate groups, while those who have immigrated to America identify as one group.[57] This reveals that the modes of biblical interpretation found on mainland Korea may not be as relevant for those who have lived the diasporic hybridity experience as immigrants. Furthermore, that second

[56] John Ahn, "A Light to the Nations: The Sociological Approach in Korean American Interpretation" in *Ways of Being, Ways of Reading,* Ed. by Jeffrey Kah-Jin Kuan & Mary F. Foskett (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2006), 118.
[57] Mai-Anh Le Tran, "Lot's Wife, Ruth, and To Thi: Gender and Racial Representations in a Theological Feast of Stories" in *Ways of Being, Ways of Reading,* Ed. by Jeffrey Kah-Jin Kuan & Mary F. Foskett (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2006), 121.

generation Korean Americans will need to pave the way to their own contextual reading of the bible.

For this contextual reading, I propose Luke 24:13-35. With the Lucan Gospel having an emphasis on food, and particularly in this specific passage a focus on food hospitality, it seems an appropriate place to start when one considers the universality of food. Korean American Catholic young adults, or people of any generation and culture, can relate to the experience of food and hospitality. Bearing this in mind, I intend to present my own Korean American Catholic Exegesis of Luke 24:13-35.

Korean American Catholic Exegesis

James H. Cone contends that the role of liberation theology is "to put into ordered speech the meaning of God's activity in the world, so that the community of the oppressed will recognize that their inner thrust for liberation is not only consistent with the gospel but is the gospel of Jesus Christ."[58] Though he did not apply this definition to a Korean American interpretation of the Bible, it is a definition that can be adapted to this cause. Particularly, the goal of Korean American interpretation of scripture as identifying the inner Korean American thrust to resolve intercultural conflicts with the gospel of Jesus Christ. In other words, the end game of Korean American Catholic interpretation is to allow those engaged in intercultural conflict to identify with the life of Jesus Christ. In addition, this identification and freedom to interpret the text according to their unique context should bring about a common language of faith that is grounded in freedom,

[58] James H. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation* (Orbis Books, 1997), 17.

familiarity, and fidelity, similar to the bible language of the African American slaves and the interpretative attitude of the laity in Brazil. In my exegesis, I will attempt to cover these two goals: identification with the gospel and common language of faith.

When taken as a one complete narrative, the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles reveal Luke's master craftsmanship and gift of storytelling. Throughout both works, several major themes emerge through a series of short stories including table fellowship. A total of ten meal stories appear throughout the Lucan gospel and on each occasion, Jesus engages a cast of characters from tax collectors to Pharisees within a meal context.[59] Based on these interactions, hospitality involves not simply an invitation to come and see, but includes a sharing of a meal together. Just as Jesus' life ends with a meal (the last supper), the resurrection begins with a similar motif on the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35 NAB Revised).

On the road to Emmaus, the two disciples encountered, but did not initially recognize Jesus. Ironically, they confide in this "stranger" about Jesus who is the source of their disappointment through all that had happened in Jerusalem. Jesus then proceeds to teach them about the messianic prophecy in scripture starting with Moses; however, the two still fail to recognize him, seemingly barring him from being truly present with them as the risen Christ. Although the events on the road to Emmaus take place on the third day after the crucifixion, another approach would be to place it on the first day of the new covenant—day one of the fulfillment of Christ's salvific promise.[60] In effect, when dining with Jesus, one comes in contact with salvation in an intimate way as illustrated by the Lucan account. Thus, the disciples' disbelief prior to the breaking of the bread is not only a failure to recognize the presence of Christ, but their salvation.

[59] Eugene LaVerdiere, *Dining in the Kingdom of God: The Origins of the Eucharist According to Luke* (Archdiocese of Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1994), 10.
[60] ibid., 23.

The events on the way to Emmaus highlight the roles (stranger—host—guest) in the Lucan retelling of the meal narratives. The multiple roles Christ embraces is significant, for in previous stories, Jesus is presented as either a host or a guest at a meal, but never both. After the resurrection, Jesus is presented as all three: stranger—guest—host. Initially, he begins as a stranger, but when he accepts the invitation to stay with the two disciples, he transitions into his role as a guest. Typically, such an invitation would include a meal and those sharing together would be considered extended family members.[61] It is natural then to assume that once Jesus accepts the invitation to stay with the two, a meal would follow. Without the meal, the pivotal moment where Christ becomes the host would never materialize. The transition from a guest to a host emerges from his invocation of the Last Supper as he took the bread, blessed it, and broke it for those gathered with him. As they finally recognized Christ in the breaking of the bread, he vanishes but continues to be present with them by expressing his salvific presence in the eucharist. The fact that this meal – the first one Jesus partakes in after his resurrection – takes place outside of Jerusalem can be seen as signifying the expansion of Christian meal fellowship.[62] No longer is the sacred reserved for Jerusalem, but to lands outside of it, bringing about an inclusive spirit.[63] Therefore, the table of the Lord represents a place of inclusion where all humanity is invited to receive God's mercy by transitioning from stranger to guest to host.

[61] Joel B. Green, *New Testament Theology: The Theology of the Gospel of Luke* (Cambridge, U.K.:Cambridge University Press, 1995), 87.
[62] Arthur A. Just Jr., *The Ongoing Feast: Table Fellowship and Eschatology at Emmaus* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1993), 50-51.
[63] Ibid. Luke used geography symbolically throughout his narrative. Jerusalem was the setting for sacred experiences like the Passion and Resurrection, as well as being the setting for the Passover. In this story Jesus departs from the norm in sharing a sacred experience (his first meal post-resurrection) with two disciples outside of Jerusalem. In this way, the meal becomes an indicator of the future of Christian meal fellowship, which will also occur outside of Jerusalem.

This transitional framework that Jesus exemplified might be seen as him overcoming the social sin of his context, a roadmap for humanity to follow in overcoming social norms and cultural conditioning that may hold us blindly captive to conflict and sin. This tri-fold role shift is a social shift we can see in intercultural dialogue. When it comes to migration, we can identify how a migrant may begin as a stranger to the host nation, and then transition into their role as guest. Eventually, the goal it to join the nation and become a host for other strangers to continue the cycle.

This process is one that can be likened to the Korean American Catholic parish experience. English speaking Korean Americans generally feel more like guests than hosts at their parishes, especially when one considers the marginal position they have in the community when the majority of ministries are Korean speaking. Some begin as strangers through their own choice to move parishes in adulthood, or through converting to the faith later in life. The cultural conflicts come as English speaking groups begin to shift from guests to hosts. The host group (the Korean speaking group), and this sharing of space requires them to compromise and collaborate within the parish. On the road to Emmaus, Jesus eventually trades roles with the two disciples when he becomes the host. Perhaps Jesus transcended cultural boundaries and social sin through initiating a cycle of humility in which all involved may be stranger, guest, and host. In the context of this particular story, Jesus utilizes the meal in order to make his shift from guest to host. Perhaps the meal is where Korean American Catholics can identify their story as one with the gospel, and to develop a common inter-cultural language by which both Korean speaking and English speaking groups can find conflict resolution.

Korean homes have undergone radical transformations following Western housing patterns with its rapid economic growth. Prior to skyscrapers and high-rises filling Seoul's skyline, Korean

homes were arranged so that each room, whether it is the kitchen or bedrooms, would open up to a courtyard. The focus of traditional Korean living arrangements maximized the communal aspect as every "exit" was an opportunity for an encounter with those you lived with. Following globalized patterns of development, the focal point of a home—whether in Korea or here in the US—has shifted from dining tables to televisions, computers, and gaming areas, reinforcing our spheres of independence and compartmentalizing our lives away from each other. Since these shifts are in direct contrast to traditional Korean cultural values, ongoing reflections are necessary for proper navigation in the context of Korean-American Catholic communities.

Amid all of the chaos and turmoil throughout its history, Korean culture has emphasized the meal setting as central to Korean identity. With every meal, regardless of what is being served, there is a reminder that partaking in the meal is a communal event as illustrated by the *banchan*—a collection of small dishes that contain differently prepared food items for the whole table to share complementing the main dish (and vice versa). Through this communal focus there is collaboration and community between those who consume the meal, as well as, between those who consume the meal and those that made the food (since the experience of the meal is not entirely dictated by the cook but by which foods are combined together by the consumer).[64] The important role of the meal is found throughout Korean society, including in the commonly used greeting of *bap meogeonni* (밥 먹었니).[65] This phrase can be translated—"have you eaten yet?"—and is as common a greeting as *annyeong,* the more formal greeting that translates to "hello." It is a phrase that simultaneously welcomes, greets, and shows care and affection for another. Considering the

[64] Kwang Ok. Kim, "Rise Cuisine and Practice" *in Re-orienting Cuisine: East Asian Foodways in the Twenty-First Century*, Ed. by Kwang Ok. Kim (Berghahn Books, 2015), 76.

[65] Here it is written in the non-honorific in a form which an elder might use when addressing someone younger whom they have a close relationship with. This is a form that many young adults may hear when being addressed by parents or older family members.

centrality of the meal in Korean culture and the departure from this shared event through the immigration experience and/or the next generation growing up in an American culture, it now becomes easier to see how generations who have adapted differently may struggle to understand each other. The meal is a major theme of the Lucan accounts and provides a possible bridge by which Korean Americans may be able to identify their own lives with the gospel, as well as, a possible avenue for a common biblical language through a Korean American biblical table fellowship.

Considering this, the Emmaus narrative provides a roadmap of generational reconciliation through invitations to share daily meals as well as eucharistic ones together where our actions of welcome (where a stranger becomes a guest) culminates in Jesus' act of salvation (where the guest becomes the host). What emerges from being at the table together is a process of reconciliation that follows Christ's transition from stranger to guest to host. Therefore, parallels between the Lucan experience and the Korean one is needed for Korean-American Catholics to discover their true identity. Just as the Emmaus meal transformed the early disciples, similar gatherings transform communities of faith through the same transformative process which builds community through reconciliation.

Welcome and hospitality are intimately connected with the meal in the greeting of *bap meogeonni*. In many ways, this is the Korean way of saying, "stay with us" (Lk 24:29), since the concern for another's well-being was always at the forefront during impoverished moments throughout Korean history. Therefore, *bap meogeonni* requires knowledge of how "hungry" a person is as well as the context of where that hunger stems from. Coupled with this greeting, *banchan* (side dishes) that are included with every meal serves as a reminder of the purpose of our lives for Korean-American Catholics. The ability to become

a host gives life to others similar to the life-giving sacrificial act of Christ. *Bap meogeonni* invites others to transition from stranger to guest, while *banchan* included with every meal allows for transition from guest to host, making the meal both communal as well as eschatological.

As Korean-American Catholics, the eucharistic meal is completed in the sending forth at the conclusion of mass in which we are called to go forth with the graces just received. In doing so, we follow Christ in not merely being either a guest or a host, but being both—the ultimate reconciliation with a stranger. By inviting others and showing genuine care for them, the salvific promise of Christ is also realized in our midst. At every meal, it is this essential eucharistic heart that gives this simple phrase, *bap meogeonni*, power by which we can begin to reconcile generations through the sharing of a meal together.

Pastoral Plan

In Luke 24:13-35, we see the two disciples walking away from Jerusalem thinking that Jesus would not rise again. However, in the end it is revealed that in walking away from Jerusalem they were also walking towards something greater. The future of discipleship, and the Kingdom of God which would be inclusive of people outside of Jerusalem. Likewise, it may be that though our society is departing form the traditional forms of community (dining rooms, family rooms, etc.), we may be walking towards an even more inclusive form of community as we sit by ourselves with our smart phones or laptops. Though physically isolating ourselves from others, we are directly and indirectly connecting with people from around the world through the internet, and so I intend to utilize social media in devising a pastoral plan to address intercultural conflicts.

My proposed plan will be one that utilizes social media to apply the exegesis of Luke 24:13-35. Ideally, it will be adaptable to fit any multicultural setting, but for the purposes of this project will be catered to the Korean American Catholic young adult context. I seek to provide a catalyst for the development of a common biblical language that can bridge the gap between generations. However, in applying Lucan food hospitality and encouraging the role shifts (stranger -- guest -- host), a primary issue for young adults is that they do not have their own home. Many have roommates or still live at home with their parents until they get married. It is overwhelmingly common for young adults to not be able to break bread together unless they eat at a restaurant. This plan will address these two issues of developing a common language and lack of meeting space.

Instagram is a social media platform that is heavily utilized by people all across the world. It utilizes a mixture of pictures, videos, "stories", and captions that are presented on a news feed to provide a place where users can share their lives with the world. In recent years, there have been users called "foodies" who have amassed a substantial following. "Foodies" use Instagram to post pictures of their newest food escapades, whether it be home-cooked or bought, and may rate the food or simply share a new experience for other users to enjoy vicariously. For this pastoral plan, I will adapt their model to implement a new kind of "foodie" style.

This Instagram account will go further than the typical "foodie" account by prioritizing hospitality, and not just food sharing. To do this, the posts will not only share the foods that are made or eaten, but will also engage the audience through caption use. Furthermore, I propose the use of a blog in tandem with the Instagram account, in order to engage the audience in a more intimate manner. Below is the outline for the plan:

1. Weekly Sunday "foodie" posts

2. Daily "story" posts of food or biblical interpretation.
3. Weekly blog posts on the food hospitality experience that was shared between the host and a guest (or perhaps a guest who began as stranger)

These three steps, with attention to detail (i.e. quality pictures, well thought out captions, well written and authentic posts), are meant to help followers relate and identify to the bible, begin to form their own bible language through the biblical food hospitality illustrated in the account feed, and sharing experience of breaking bread together through the blog. The ultimate goal is that followers will begin to think more openly and inclusively through the food and the bible, as well as, be inspired to think creatively about how to serve one another in the humble cycle of tri-fold role shifts. The intention is that this Instagram account will become the non-geographical home by which young adults can meet and gather.

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